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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

A guideline for administrators and teachers in child development centers for nursery school age children is presented. It lists equipment and supplies for a class unit of 15 children. Many of the items can be made or found by volunteers. Ideas for improvising and for making the best use of existing material are included.

The suggested equipment and supplies are listed according to the type of activity involved. Such activities as indoor blockbuilding, household and dramatic play, table activities, art activities, woodwork activities, music activities, science projects, indoor and outdoor water play, and literature activities are mentioned. Such general equipment and supplies as furniture, audiovisual aids, food service for centers with a full-day program, permanent facilities, and outdoor equipment are also described. Inexpensive play materials for most of the activity areas are listed. Directions for making puppets are given.

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Project HEAD START

equipment and supplies

Guidelines for Administrators and Teachers in Child Development Centers

Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C.

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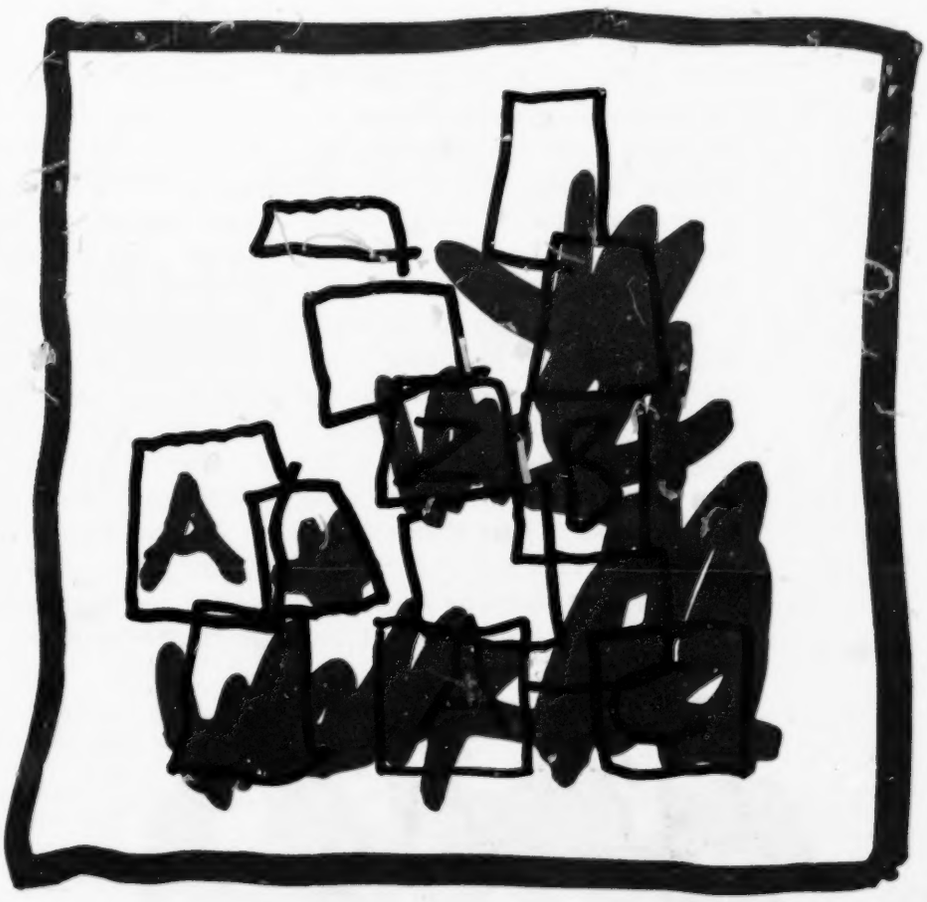
THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Child Development Center is both a concept and a community facility. In concept it represents the drawing together of all those resources—family, community and professional—which can contribute to the child's total development. It draws heavily on the professional skills of persons in nutrition, health, education, psychology, social work, and recreation. It recognizes both paid and volunteer non-professionals can make important contributions. Finally the concept emphasizes the family is fundamental to the child's development. Parents should play an important role in developing policies; will work in the Centers and participate in the programs.

As a community facility the Child Development Center is organized around its classroom and outdoor play areas. Ideally it should also provide a program for health services, parent interviews and counseling, feeding of the children, and meetings of parents and other residents of the community. The space is arranged so as to permit working in small groups or individually with the children. Where some activities are performed at other locations, the staff should function as an integral part of the Center.



A child learns through the manipulation of objects in ways ranging from simple observation to increasingly complicated play activities. Thus, the equipment and supplies chosen by each Child Development Center are vital to the success of the program.

The provision of a wide variety of the most exciting and stimulating materials is essential, particularly for the child from a low-income family whose home environment may be meager and lacking in stimulation.

Imaginatively selected equipment will permit the child to experience a wide assortment of textures, sizes, shapes, sounds and movements. Encouraged by appropriate toys and materials, children will engage in dramatic play, express themselves through story, music and art, and develop their coordination and balance. They will become acquainted with a range of concrete objects that may help provide a basis for the beginnings of abstract design.

Materials should demonstrate good taste and good design. Sturdiness and durability is essential. A plentiful supply of materials is important. While too many toys available at one time can prove over-stimulating, too few may lead to a program that is unnecessarily narrow and monotonous.

Equipment and supplies for a Child Development Center may come from several sources. Some materials must be purchased. Many inexpensive items can be bought at local hardware, variety and grocery stores; some more costly items are available from commercial companies which specialize in nursery-kindergarten equipment. Others can be borrowed from schools, churches, settlement houses, play groups, homes and libraries. Parents and other volunteers can make some of the equipment. A great deal can be found free of charge: natural, raw material; scrap material such as nuts, bolts, lumber, tires or clothing for make-believe play.

Volunteers can be helpful in suggesting new sources for materials and in procuring many that otherwise might be unthought of, unobtainable or too expensive for the Center to obtain.

This pamphlet is divided into two parts. Part I is a list of suggested equipment and supplies for a class unit of 15 children. The items starred are those which can often be made or found by volunteers. Part II contains ideas for improvision and for making the best use of existing materials.

The list below is a guide. Quantities are approximations. Teachers may add to the list and alter the amounts as needed.

PART I

Suggested Equipment and Supplies for a Class Unit of 15 Children—Indoor Blockbuilding

400 hardwood unit blocks, including such shapes as units, half units, double units, quadruple units, pillars, large and small cylinders, curves, triangles, ramps, Y switches, X switches, floor boards, roof boards.

Floor Play Materials

24 cars, airplanes, boats, fire engines, wagons, tractors, trains of assorted sizes.

30 rubber, plastic or wooden figures of farm and domestic animals; community workers: policemen, firemen, postmen; family members: mother, father, boy, girl, baby, grandparents.

1 rocking boat.

Household and Dramatic Play

8-10 rubber dolls; doll clothes; chest for doll clothes

2 doll carriages

1 doll bed, big and sturdy enough for a child to crawl into

1 smaller doll bed or crib

Blankets, mattresses, pillows for doll beds

Furniture for household play: wooden stove, cupboard for dishes, sink, small table and chairs

Kitchenware: plastic dishes, tea set, small cooking utensils, silverware

Housekeeping equipment: broom, mop, dustpan, brush, iron, ironing board, clothes line, clothes pins

Full-length mirror

Dress-up clothes: men's and women's shoes, pocketbooks, jewelry, hats, belts

Supplies for other dramatic play: office equipment, telephones, cash registers, firemen's hats, badges, play money, stethoscope, doctors' bags and white coats, nurses' hats

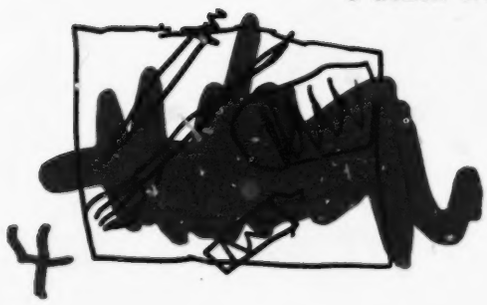
[1]In selecting dolls and wooden or rubber figures it is wise to include attractive, realistic representations of people of different racial backgrounds. The same consideration applies when selecting pictures to be displayed on walls and bulletin boards and when choosing stories.

Table Activities

12 wooden inlay puzzles of varying degrees of difficulty
1 puzzle rack
Pegs and peg boards
Matching games, such as picture Lotto
Sets of small blocks (cubes, parquetry, interlocking, snap-in)
Large table dominoes: picture sets, number sets
Nested blocks
Color Cone
Pounding peg board
Cuisenaire rods; counting frames; abacus
Hammer and nail sets with celotex boards

Art Activities

★ 2 easels
Easel paint brushes with ½" and ¾" handles (12 for a summer program, 24 for a year-round program)
Liquid tempera paint of various colors (18-24 quarts for a summer program; 75-100 quarts for a year-round program)
White manila paper 18" x 24" (2000 sheets for a summer program, 8000 sheets for a year-round program)
Newsprint 24" x 36" (1000 sheets for a summer program; 4000 sheets for a year-round program)
Paste and paste brushes
Finger paint paper or glazed shelf paper (5 packages for a summer program, 20 packages for a year-round program)
Clay (25 pounds for a summer program, 50 pounds for a year-round program)
Construction paper of various colors (6 packages for a summer program, 24 packages for a year-round program)
★ 4 clay boards, 2 plastic covered pails for storing clay
Flour and salt for dough (25 lbs. flour and 10 lbs. salt for a summer program, 100 lbs. flour and 40 lbs. salt for a year-round program)
18 blunt scissors, including some left-handed scissors
★ 5 aprons or smocks
★ Miscellaneous supplies: orange juice cans, baby food jars, drying rack, florist wire, pipe cleaners, armature wire, colored tooth picks, macaroni pieces, transparent colored paper
5 dozen crayons



Woodwork

1 sturdy, low workbench with 2 vises
Tools: four 7 oz. claw hammers, two 12" crosscut saws, 1 drill, 1 rasp, 1 file, 2 screw drivers, assorted nails with large heads, screws, 2 large C clamps

★ Soft wood scraps, doweling
★ Sandpaper
★ Miscellaneous: buttons, washers, corks, wire, nuts, hooks and eyes, spools, bottle caps

Music

Phonograph and records
Autoharp
Xylophone

★ Drums, triangles, tambourines, cymbals, tom-toms
★ Sleighbells for hands and feet, shakers, maracas, rhythm sticks
★ Balls, hoops, scarves

Science and Special Projects

Bar and horseshoe magnets
Magnifying glass
Large indoor and outdoor thermometers
Tape measure, yard stick, rulers
Scales
Measuring cups and spoons
Dry cell batteries, flash light bulbs, electric wire
Pulleys and gears
Hand mirrors
Hot plate and electric frying pan
★ Aquarium and terrarium
Cages for pets
1 typewriter for the children to use

Water Play (indoors and out of doors)

Small pitchers, watering cans, measuring cups, bowls of various sizes, plastic bottles, medicine droppers
Funnels, strainers, egg beaters, ladles, straws, lengths of hose, brushes
Soap and soap flakes

Literature

25 picture story books appropriate to the age and special interests of the children. The books should include a range of poetry and prose, humor, fiction and non-fiction. Local librarians and the State Library Extension Service will aid in making selections. Lists of recommended books for young children are also available from Bank Street College of Education, 69 Bank Street, New York, and from the Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. Additional books should be continuously brought in to fit children's experiences and interests of the moment.

Furniture

15 chairs 8"-12" in height
3 tables 18"-22" in height for snacks, meals and tablework activities
2 room dividers
15 mats or throw rugs for resting in half-day programs
15 lockers for hanging coats, hats, rubbers, extra change of clothes

Audio-Visual Aids

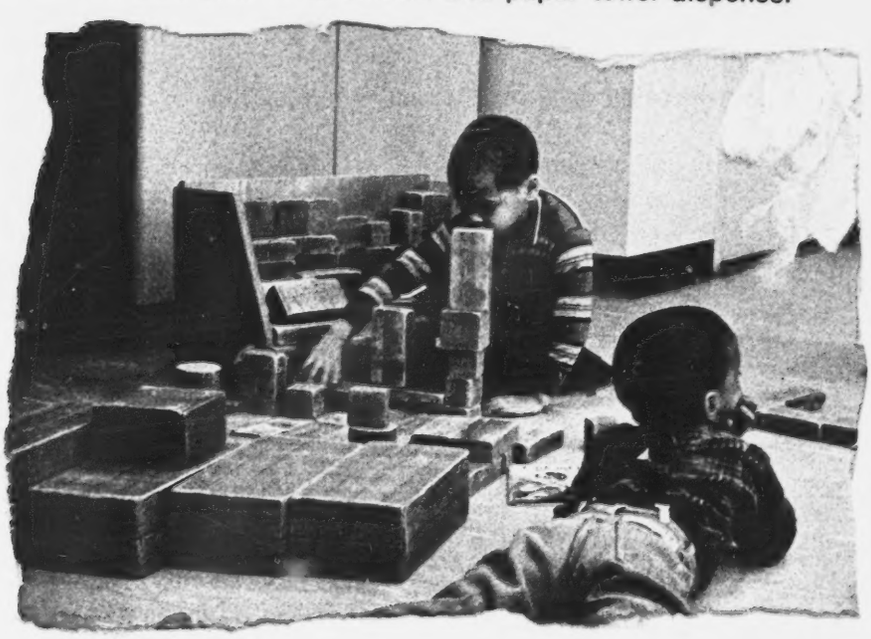
Tape recorder
Slide projector
8mm. loop
16mm. movie projector and screen

Food Service (for Centers with full-day programs)

1 range with oven
1 refrigerator
1 table on casters
Cooking utensils: pots, pans, cooking dishes and other items necessary for basic cooking
20 bowls (shallow, low sides, unbreakable)
20 cups or small glasses, unbreakable
20 dessert dishes, unbreakable
20 forks, salad size
4 large glasses
6 knives for teachers
2 yds. oilcloth or plastic, for mats
5 quart pitchers, easy-pouring spouts, big handles
5 smaller pitchers, easy-pouring spouts, big handles
24 plates, breakfast size, unbreakable
12 tablespoons
24 teaspoons
2 large trays, aluminum
6 small trays

Permanent Facilities

Low, open shelves for general storage and display of small toys and blocks
High shelves for teacher's use for storage
Cabinets for storage of supplies, art materials, games
3 toilets, children's size
3 sinks at child's level, and paper towel dispensers
3 mirrors over sinks
1 work sink in classroom and paper towel dispenser



General Supplies

First aid equipment, disposable tissues, bathroom tissue, paper towels, paper cups and plates, straws
Waste paper baskets, staplers, masking tape, scotch tape, hole punchers, magic markers, drying rack for wet clothing

Outdoor Equipment

★ Sandbox, cans, buckets, spades, spoons, small dishes, colander
Jungle gym
Ladder box
Horizontal ladder
5 tricycles
3 four-wheeled cars or "horses" manipulated by a child's feet
2 sturdy doll carriages
2 sturdy wooden packing cases (42" x 30" x 30")
2 sturdy wooden packing cases (35" x 23" x 16")
24 hollow wooden blocks (5½" x 11" x 11")
12 hollow wooden blocks (5½" x 11" x 22")
12 low saw horses
8 small wooden kegs
Wooden ladders
Walking boards and flexible jumping boards
★ Lengths of sturdy rope and garden hose
★ Automobile and airplane tires and rubber inner tubes
★ Rubber balls of different sizes; bean bags

PART II

Inexpensive Play Materials

Painting

If easels are not available, children can use the floor or counter space as an easel. Or, home-made easels can be made by turning straight-legged chairs upside down on a table or on the floor. Place 18" x 24" pieces of Masonite or similar inexpensive material within the legs of the chairs.

Want-ad sections of newspapers can be used as painting paper. Shelf paper can be used for finger painting. Newsprint is sometimes obtainable at no charge from local newspaper offices.

Worn-out men's shirts can be made into smocks by taking tucks in the shoulders.

Frozen juice cans make excellent paint containers.

Home-made fingerpaint can be made inexpensively using any of the following recipes:

1½ cups laundry starch
1 qt. boiling water
1½ cups soap flakes
½ cup talcum (optional)

Mix starch with enough cold water to make a paste, add boiling water, stir until clear and glossy. Add talcum. Cool mixture, add soap flakes, stir until evenly distributed. Mixture should be thick. Pour into jars and cover. Keep in cool place.

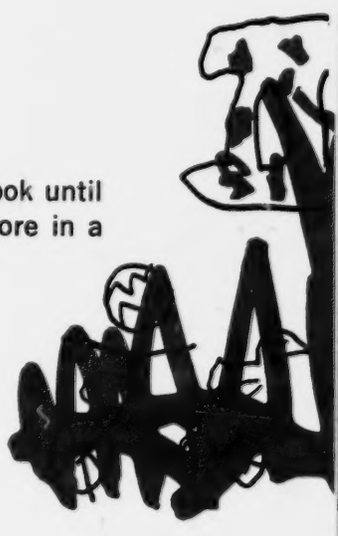
3 parts of water
1 part of cornstarch
glycerine (a few drops)

Bring water to a boil and dissolve starch. Stir in the glycerine and food coloring. Let mixture cool and store in a cool place.

2 tbsp. gloss starch
Add small amount of water to form a paste
Add 1 cup of boiling water; cook until clear
Add ½ cup of granulated soap (not flakes),
Beat until smooth

1 cup soap flakes
1 cup starch
½ cup talcum
1 cup cold water

Stir the ingredients into 7 cups of boiling water and cook until thick, about 5 minutes. Cool in a covered dish and store in a cool place.



Other Art Activities

Home-made clay or dough can be made inexpensively by using any of the following recipes:

1 cup flour
½ cup salt
3 tsp. alum
¼-½ cup water
vegetable coloring as desired

This type of clay does not harden but, when left to dry for 24 hours, the crust-like hardening of the salt makes the clay manageable.

1 part flour
1 part salt
¼ part water

Mix together to a soft consistency. Will keep 3 or 4 days if wrapped in wax paper and stored in a refrigerator.

½ cup cornstarch
1 cup salt
½ cup cold water

Mix cornstarch and salt, add water and boil. The mixture thickens quickly. Cool and use.

★ Raw macaroni can be strung on yarn or twine. To color the macaroni beads, dip them in poster paint, hang them on a nail to dry.

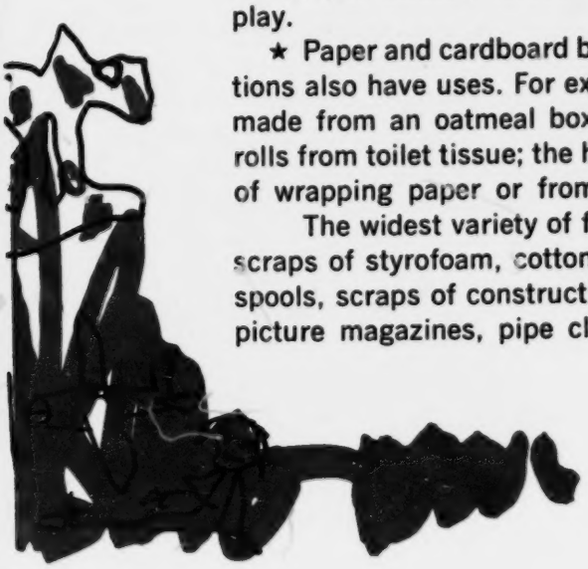
★ Colored paper straws, cut in 1½" to 2" lengths can be strung to form long chains.

★ Children with good coordination can use paper plates to make bill and letter holders. Punch holes about 1" apart along the end of half of one whole paper plate and along the edge of half a paper plate. Color the plates. Fit the half-plate upside down on the whole plate, matching the holes. Sew together with yarn and put a hook on the back of the plate.

★ Paper has many other uses. Children can make paper plate faces, pin wheels, folded soldier hats, paper boats for water play.

★ Paper and cardboard boxes of all types, shapes and descriptions also have uses. For example, the body of an animal can be made from an oatmeal box; legs and neck made of cardboard rolls from toilet tissue; the head made from a round pill box, ears of wrapping paper or from milk bottle caps, and a rope tail.

The widest variety of free materials are useful for collages: scraps of styrofoam, cotton, bits of cloth, colored yarn, wooden spools, scraps of construction paper, calendars, catalogues and picture magazines, pipe cleaners.



Household and Dramatic Play

Sides of doll houses can be made from refrigerator or TV crates, often available free from local stores.

Small cardboard boxes placed on top or beside each other make rooms for a small doll house. The sides of the boxes can be papered with scraps of wallpaper; scraps of old toweling can be placed on the bottoms of boxes for rugs.

Stair steps can be used as the rooms for a doll house, particularly when children want two or three story houses.

Some local telephone companies will lend a working telephone set with two instruments for classroom use.

Egg cartons, oatmeal boxes, tin cans (with all sharp edges removed) lend great reality to store play. It is wise to leave the labels attached to the cans and boxes.

Old license plates, mounted on a board to prevent cuts, are a realistic addition to dramatic play.

Steering wheels are sometimes available at junk yards. Mounted firmly on a big outdoor block or wood stand, they add much stimulus to car, boat and airplane make-believe.

Woodwork

A work bench can be improvised by using a sturdy box or table.

Soft pine mill ends of various sizes and shapes can be obtained from the local lumber yard.

Good, workmanlike tools young children need can often be borrowed from homes.

Story Telling

A flannel board offers an interesting, inexpensive addition to story time. It often proves a comforting "prop" for one inexperienced in the storytelling art. The board should be easily seen by all in the group. Cut a piece of flannel 20" x 24" and mount on heavy cardboard, masonite or plywood. Make drawings of story characters and objects on lightweight cardboard, and paste flannel on the back of the cardboard. The cardboard with the flannel backing will adhere to the flannel board.

Large and interesting pictures are available at airline offices, travel agencies, railroad and ship companies, and many industrial and business organizations. These posters and pictures can be hung on the wall or used as the basis for stories or discussion and conversation times.

Photographs of the children themselves and of the places they have visited on trips make an excellent base for stories and conversation.

Out-of-date wallpaper books, available from most paint stores, can be provocative for children to examine. The books also give children experience with various textures. Scraps from the books can be used for making collages.

Music

A deep bongo drum can be made using the can which contained the sawdust for floor sweeping. Check with the school custodian. Paint the can in brilliant colors. Cut two pieces of rubber inner tube two inches wider than the bottom and top of the can. Punch holes on both pieces of the inner tube, 1¼ inches from edge. Lace the bottom and top with heavy cord.

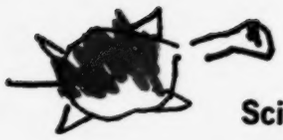
A drum can also be made from a chopping bowl. Use a circular piece of drumhead skin 1" larger than the circumference of the top of the bowl. The skin, a discard or an inexpensive "second," can be found at your local music store. Soak the skin in water overnight. Stretch it across the top of the bowl and nail it down in four places with large thumb or upholstery tacks. Keep stretching the skin as you finish tacking (close enough together to touch) all the way around.

Rhythm sticks can be made by using ½" diameter dowel sticks 12" long. They are attractive when painted with bright colors.

Maracas or rattles can be made by filling small boxes or cardboard milk containers with gravel, pebbles, unpopped popcorn, beans, cherry pits. Attach dowel sticks for handles or attach the maracas to children's legs and arms with rubber bands for use when the children are dancing.

★ A coconut shell makes an excellent clapper with a "horsehoof" sound. Simply cut the shell in two and remove the coconut meat and milk.

★ Tambourines can be made from paper plates. Punch 8 bottle caps with a nail. Punch 4 holes around the plate. String 2 bottle caps together, back to back, with a large knot at each end.



Science

★ A large paste jar can be made into a terrarium. Stock the jar with plants and snails.

Materials for display, to catch children's interest and stir their curiosity, are available everywhere: stones of various sizes, shapes, colors, textures; pods, burrs, seeds, cotton bolls, acorns; shells of all sizes, shapes, colors; everyday objects such as hasps, clips, keys and locks.

Rabbits, turtles, goldfish, guppies, hamsters make good pets.

"Feel boxes" can provide the opportunity young children need to explore differences in textures. Put different types of material—fur, velvet, suede, silk, coarse wool—in a box for children to explore with their fingers. Let them put their hands into paper bags each containing a different substance: sawdust, dirt, flour, salt, sugar. Let them tell by feel the contents of other paper bags or boxes containing sponge, wood, plastic material, leather, sandpaper.

Water Activity

Few activities are as satisfying to young children as painting with water. The only supplies needed are a can of water and a paint brush.

Bubble blowing is another enjoyable activity. Make a soap and water solution, using enough soap to produce a concentrated brew. Add food coloring for colored bubbles. A spool or a straw can be used to blow through.

Puppets

The simplest puppet can be made by drawing a face on the palm of a child's hand with a soft lead pencil or by painting the face on with tempera paint. A piece of cloth can be draped around the arm if a costume is desired.

A cloth-head puppet can be made by wadding cotton over the end of a tongue depressor. Cover the cotton with cloth, stretch the cloth tautly, and tie securely with string. Draw a face on the cloth and, if desired, put on a dress to cover the tongue depressor and hand.

Paper bag puppets are unusually simple. Fill a paper bag with cotton batting or crumpled newspaper. Insert a tongue depressor in the bag, and bind the loose edges of the stuffed bag around the depressor with string. Paint a face on the bag, and if desired, put a costume around the hand and depressor.

Potato puppets can be made by inserting a tongue depressor in a potato. The potato should not be too large or heavy for the children to handle. Facial features can be created by painting one surface of the potato or by using bits of paper, kept in place by pins. Strands of yarn or strips of paper can be pinned on for hair.

Potatoes can also be used to make simple finger puppets. Instead of inserting a tongue depressor, cut a hole large enough for two of a child's fingers in one end of a potato with an apple corer.

Simple figures of people and animals can be made by pasting or stapling the fingers to a tongue depressor.

Finger puppets can be made by drawing a face or animal on a narrow band of paper. Scotch tape the band around a finger or one around each of as many fingers as are needed for the play.

Old gloves can become somewhat more elaborate puppets. Cut off the fingers and thumb of a glove and stuff them with cotton batting or nylon hose. The thumb becomes the head and body of the puppet; two fingers become arms and two fingers become legs. Sew the arms and legs to the thumb section in the proper position. Bind the head and waist sections tightly with string.

For Further Reading

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Equipment and Supplies. Washington: Association for Childhood Education International, 1963.

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The Complete Book of Children's Play, by Ruth Hartley and R. M. Goldenson. New York: Crowell, 1957.

Understanding Children's Play, by R. Hartley, L. Frank and R. M. Goldenson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1952.

The following organizations publish many pamphlets on play equipment and creative experiences for young children:

Association for Childhood Education International
3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Bank Street College of Education
69 Bank Street
New York, N.Y. 10014

Play Schools Association
120 West 57 Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

National Association for the Education of Young Children
104 E. 25 Street
New York, N.Y. 10010